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The Honorable State Senator Michael Kowall (R, White Lake)
The Michigan State Senate, 305 Farnum Building
PO Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909-7536

Dear Senator Kowall:

I met with you the previous day from which this letter is written, and I'll admit readily, I was not prepared to speak before the Economic Development Committee. But there's a few things I would like to say that were not spoken to you or your Committee colleagues (Senators Hildenbrand, Nofs, Hunter, Emmons, Hansen, Smith).

I first wish to talk about the grandstanding that Manuel Moroun & the DIBC is doing in bringing groups to Lansing, first company employees and/or their families coming from Metro Detroit earlier this year at the Capitol Building, then Minister Malik Shabazz and his New Marcus Garvey Movement, each bringing their signs & banners of protest. What they won't tell you is that DIBC is fighting in two separate Wayne County courts *right now* (Kathleen MacDonald and Prentis Edwards are the judges adjudicating those separate cases. And DIBC's broadcast commercials are simply not credible.

For my part I don't begrudge Manuel Moroun and DIBC. He wants to retain his bridge and expand it, then God bless him. But I urge that his company accomplish at least these two things:

- I would urgently recommend that DIBC makes those repairs right now before that 82 year old bridge (either in part or in its' entirety) gives way with an 18 wheeler or a personal vehicle plunging into the Detroit River below, as that bridge *was not* designed to withstand the kind of traffic traveling into and out of Windsor, ON, CA.

A quick bit of history: Austin & Bower built the Ambassador Bridge for \$23.5 million between May 1927 and November 1929, entirely with private funds. The Bower family owned the bridge until about August 1979, when Manuel Moroun purchased controlling interest of the bridge and took ownership, *beating out* Berkshire Hathaway's Warren Buffett.

- I would also recommend that Manuel Moroun changes how he treats his properties within the city of Detroit, as he is one of the city's largest owners of private homes and/or home lots. He is consistently taking monies out of the City of Detroit without reinvesting back into the city that has certainly helped make him a billionaire.

I really do think that a second bridge needs to be built for three reasons (plus a recommendation):

1. First, to remove the monopoly of having 25%-50% of international trade (US-Canada) traveling on one roadway owned by a private citizen. Why should we, the citizenry of Michigan, hold ourselves hostage fiscally and economically to this company's (DIBC) whims and wishes in logistical terms when we can (and frankly should) build our own bridge into Canada? I haven't heard that question asked once--and that is downright disturbing to me.
2. Second, the NITC would be an additional roadway allowing for US-Canada access just in case of an attack on the United States by a foreign country. *Certainly we don't* want that kind of activity happening within our country's borders *at any time*, but since 9/11/2001 that is something we must factor into our decision-making process. That is America's collective reality since that terrible day, whether we individually like it or not.

3. Third and finally, we need an additional bridge to help begin the process of putting Michigan on track towards becoming a great state again---to live, work, play, take in a game of your favorite sports team, shop, entertain, dine, and generally enjoy life with gusto. Note that I did not say the City of Detroit, although it would be located in Detroit, but rather the State of Michigan. Michigan is a delightful place with terrific people that the rest of the country, but should know about for a lot more than the current political & economic upheaval that the City of Detroit has been enduring in recent years.
4. The Detroit Free Press for Easter Sunday, April 4 2010, in the article "The Detroit That Could Be*" had these words in the commentary, which I paraphrase: Let us not take this moment of decision right now and, looking back a decade hence, squander this opportunity before us. This NITC project was one of twelve projects mentioned in the article that can, if pursued and accomplished, turn Michigan's fortunes around, beginning in Detroit and spreading statewide. (*Strongly recommended reading found on pgs. 19A and 21A-23A)

The NITC project is an opportunity to *begin* the process of reversing that cycle of injustice and indignity that Detroit has long suffered---*and in so doing if we work together, begin the community benefits process that we are seeking for residents of Southwest Detroit.* These are not special rights that needlessly make this project cost prohibitive. Rather, these are human rights that can, if added into this proposal, allow industry, business, and citizens to live peaceably and contentedly, (Using an analogy here,) making for a fluid & graceful "dance" presentation on stage.

Right now, as things stand, the three of them coexist in SW Detroit like three thoroughly uncoordinated "dancers" on stage, bumbling, fumbling, and stumbling all over each other, making a disastrous presentation. What we as members of SDEV would like to see instead is that industry, business, and residents are liberated to do what each "dancer" does best, bringing out the best in themselves and each other in so doing. Regulated industries located there doing that which they do best. Regulated businesses located there doing that which they do best. And residents of SW Detroit would like to do which they do best: live life without having to worry about excessive pollutants in their air, their water, or the soil on which they live. Thus, we would like to be living in much healthier and much more coordinated conditions in SW Detroit than is happening today (End of analogy).

Is this proposed project with community benefits a panacea? No. But it is a start in the right direction. This NITC project can help turn the fiscal & economic corner for the benefit of all Michiganders, not merely for a select few. This is a time when we (whether legislators or private citizens) cannot afford to be hampered by indecision and inactivity. If we allow for that stagnation in our thoughts and in our deeds, we do so at our own fiscal & economic peril.

Approximately 150 to 200 people between the legislative branch, the executive branch, and the judicial branch have the ability to make legislation for slightly north of 10 million people choosing to make the Great Lakes State their home, including the seven people making up the Economic Development Committee. Each of you have the ability to make choices that either benefit or detriment the citizenry of this state. Senator Kowall (Chairman), Senator Hildenbrand, Senator Nofs, Senator Hunter, Senator Emmons, Senator Hansen, and Senator Smith, I urge each of you to use that enormous power each of you possess wisely and well. Let's start Reinventing Michigan. We can achieve great things together if we both believe.

With grace & peace,



Phillip Allmond